

DD/M&S Registry  
File Records

DD/M&amp;S 73-2331

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant for Information Control

STATINT


SUBJECT : Microfilm/Records Management



Precisely. Handy though it is, I dislike categorization, which I guess translates to dislike of black and white distinctions. The problem, if there is one, is semantic and historical. I would guess that the great majority of employees, if asked what they understood by "records management", would respond in terms of retirement of old documents, disposal of duplicates, or, in other words, the storage of dead paper. Another problem is understanding the difference between the physical form in which information is recorded and the information itself. I agree that a sheet of type-written paper, a mag tape, a piece of photographic film, micro- or macro-, a punched paper tape, or perhaps a disc file is a record. With perhaps some rare exceptions the same information could be recorded in any of those forms. Which form is most effective for the processing to which the information is going to be subjected is determined I think largely by the use to which the information is going to be put after it is recorded.

The organizational or bureaucratic accommodation to these differences is what we're concerned with here. I think it will take a long time to re-educate most of our people away from the dead paper connotation of records management. I would short-cut the apparent gap (not a real one) between information processing and records management by putting them in the same organization. Until that time, I hope not too distant, we've got to find a way to coordinate effectively and, by coordination, eliminate felt differences between the Microfilm Branch and the Records Administration Branch.

Perhaps we should not wait for far-reaching organizational changes but consider an immediate consolidation of the two shops, perhaps with a change of name to get away from the stereotypes.

I hope you don't mind my taking the liberty of providing copies of this and the notes which prompted it to 

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Robert S. Wattles

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cc: Chief, SSS \*

ADD/M&amp;S:RSW/ms (12 June 73)

Distribution:

Orig &amp; 1 - Adse

1 - RSW Chrono

\*w/cy of Background

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1 - DD/M&amp;S Subject, w/Background (DD/M&amp;S 73-2324)

11 June 1973

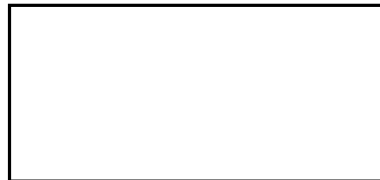
MEMORANDUM FOR: Associate Deputy Director, M&S

Bob:

Pursuant to our Friday's conversation relative to microfilm, here is another thought as expressed by the DD/S&T Technical Assistant.

I think one of the problems we have in this Agency is segregating our information in terms of the medium upon which it is placed. Thus, microfilm is considered as something different than records because microfilm isn't on paper. Records management is construed as associating itself almost solely with old papers. In consideration of these two, data stored on mag tape becomes something else.

All three media are part of the problem of information management. If records represent information which is retained for subsequent use, then all three are records. All three methodologies are subject to systematic analysis and management as part of the overall whole of information management. I am not suggesting that two of the three should be subsumed in the third but I am suggesting that all three are part of the same problem and should be managed coherently.



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Special Assistant for Information Control

Attachment

DDS&T-1714/73

7 June 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant for Information Control

SUBJECT : Role of the Microfilm Branch

REFERENCE : Editor's Corner, Records Management Newsletter,  
No. 73-3, Dated June 1973

1. The referent newsletter poses the question, "Does no one find fault or object to the role claimed for Microfilm Branch?".

2. There is no objection by this Directorate if the purpose of this Branch is to provide assistance in equipment evaluation, systems applications, microfilm training and other technical information. We also feel that it is necessary to coordinate microfilm equipment purchases, and this Branch is the most logical location in the Agency.

3. It is current practice that when a component decides to convert a records series that is in hard copy form to microfilm, a form 3239 is prepared and then forwarded through the senior Records Management Officer to the Microfilm Branch for approval. This approval authority is in direct contradiction to [ ] which quite clearly establishes this responsibility as a records management function. It is suggested that the approval authority be transferred to the Records Administration Office and that form 3239 be revised to include the Microfilm Branch as a coordinator.

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Technical Assistant  
to the  
DDS&T Records Management Officer

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